

Unit Chambers Pupillage Policy

UNIT is a new breed of Chambers. Unit Chambers has been operating since 17th July 2020. Our recruitment policy and business plan are to focus on the next generation of barristers; investing and retaining them in an evolving, challenging but rewarding profession. At UNIT Chambers we are committed to achieving a fairer and more accessible pathway to becoming a barrister.

- 1) Lisa Edmunds founded UNIT Chambers in July 2020. We have grown significantly over the last 3 years and now have a number of Senior Consultant Barristers, Consultant Barristers, a Door Tenant, Pupils and a strong support team.
- 2) Lisa Edmunds, Claire Jones and Kristine Lidgerwood are all trained Pupil Supervisors with Lisa taking on the role of Lead Supervisor.
- 3) UNIT Chambers has a Pupillage Leadership Team [PLT] – which has evolved and adapted over time. The 2023 PLT consists of Lisa Edmunds (CEO and Senior Consultant Barrister), Roger Draper (Executive Chairman and previous CEO of Sport England and British Tennis) and Callum Hurley (Consultant Barrister and recent pupil at Cobden House Chambers).
- 4) The remit of the PLT is to ensure there is a fair and transparent recruitment process which includes the organization of outreach events with prospective students / barristers. The PLT will be responsible for considering the applications that are made for pupillage and completing the interview process. The PLT will convene at least twice a year to review its pupillage framework.
- 5) It is the intention of UNIT Chambers to continue to add depth to the PLT by having a membership with a mix of gender, diversity and experience (both professional and personal). Members of the PLT will be appointed by the CEO of UNIT Chambers.
- 6) Members of the PLT will read the Bar Council guidance surrounding fair recruitment and selection. Lisa Edmunds has completed the Bar Council's 'Fair Recruitment and Selection' course.
- 7) UNIT Chambers will advertise all vacancies for pupillage on a website specified by the Bar Standards Board in the Bar Qualification Manual. This is currently the Pupillage Gateway. In addition, UNIT Chambers will advertise on its website and social media platforms.
- 8) There will be a review of all written applications to carry out an initial screening. An interview long list of 10-18 applicants is developed from the initial screening and a shortlist of around 6 candidates will be put forward to the final interview stage. The following criteria will be applied -
 - i) Qualifications to ensure that candidates meet the requirements for pupillage as set out in the Authorisation Framework,

- ii) Relevant work experience (demonstrating a solid interest in Family Law)
- iii) Other interests, activities and achievements and
- iv) Drive and determination.

9) Interviews are conducted for approximately 45 minutes each and structured to ensure that similar areas relating to the selection criteria are covered in questions to all candidates in order to ensure comparability between interviews. Each candidate is asked the same core questions which will normally include a set problem of which the candidates are given notice upon or before arrival for the interview. Questions cover any matters arising from the applicant's application, general questions about the Bar, ethics, developments in the law, an understanding of Unit Chambers and the applicants' legal interests and aspirations. Each panel member has a copy of the applicant's application. Each candidate is scored according to a set criteria.

10) The PLT will meet as soon as possible following the final interviews to reach a consensus on the most suitable candidate(s). A majority decision is taken when the team cannot reach a consensus decision. In circumstances where a decision on selection cannot be made following the interviews, a shortlist is prepared of not more than four candidates [this can be increased if exceptional circumstances exist] who are invited for a further interview. Offers of pupillage will be followed up by direct email to the candidate.

11) Notes of the decision-making process for selection are taken and maintained by a member of the PLT.

12) The records of all applications to UNIT Chambers for pupillage and all documentation relating to the selection decisions are retained for at least one year.

13) Under the direction of the CEO the Practice Manager will carry any necessary credential checks.

14) The Practice Manager will ensure that a 'Written Agreement' will be signed by UNIT Chambers and the pupil/s prior to the commencement of pupillage. The 'Written Agreement' outlines what is expected of the Pupil and what the Pupil can expect of UNIT Chambers.

15) The 'Written Agreement' will contain the training programme that Pupils are expected to undertake, and how they will be assessed upon it.

16) UNIT Chambers will be proactive in encouraging the integration of its Pupil(s) into its team. UNIT Chambers will hold a welcoming meeting when they start. In addition to having a Pupil Supervisor, it is our intention that each Pupil will be assigned another member of chambers to act as a 'buddy'. The role of the 'buddy' will be to assist the Pupil to integrate into working on the Northern Circuit. The 'buddy' will act as a 'confidant'. The 'buddy' will have at least 2-years' of experience in family law.

17) UNIT Chambers will be flexible in the way in which it provides pupillage. We recognise that individual pupils may have differing needs and it is important that we address those. An example of this may be that the pupil has childcare commitments and may need to finish early on certain days. There will need to be close liaison between the Pupil Supervisor and the Practice Manager to ensure that suitable arrangements are made to assist Pupils in this way. Unit is committed to ensuring that we promote a diverse legal profession.

18) It is important that during the non-practicing period pupils are exposed to a variety of work within Family Law. Experience will be offered to the pupil in a local authority legal department and at a private law firm. We envisage this to be extremely beneficial. Further, judicial marshalling will be organised. This will allow a pupil to gain insight into what is expected by the Judiciary when a member of the Bar appears before them.

19) Chambers will ensure that Pupils in the practicing period have access to the Advanced MLC Diary,-Dropbox and Lexis Nexis.

20) The Pupil will have access to the UNIT Chambers toolkit. This includes but is not limited to, daily teams check-ins, weekly leadership team meetings, monthly UNIT Chambers meetings, monthly UNIT Chambers networking events, annual UNIT Chambers business workout weekend, corporate board that oversees strategy, business build and growth, UNIT Chambers advisory board with deep sector experience and skill set, end to end compliance and regular blogs and newsletters. In addition, there is a dedicated practice management team, access to the tech support team, fast pace client billing, 24/7 office access with shower facilities and access to meeting rooms. Further, pupils now have access to UNIT Chambers' Manchester office which offers the same level of service for barrister and client.

21) UNIT Chambers offers access to its corporate finance support service team at Langtons Accountants. UNIT Chambers considers the personal management of finances to be an integral part of a Pupils training. UNIT Chambers will support the Pupil with a session with an accountant to develop, at an early stage, good practices in personal finance.

22) UNIT Chambers offers access to its brand support service team to ensure the Pupil is well briefed on how to market and promote his / herself in a way that is consistent and compatible with the ethos of the profession as well as optimising individual and collective promotion.

23) The pupil will be supported in having access to the barrister tool kit which includes, a paperless / paper light environment, Microsoft 0365 business premium licence, xero

accounting cloud-based software, solicitor share portal, 3XC phone app for office support, smartphone and tablet integration, fully mobile suite, 12 hours CPD, dedicated marketing and social media support and dedicated server space.

- 24) The pupil will be supported in the completion of the Ethics examination (where applicable). This will include a plan for how the pupil will prepare for the examination, including any time out of court as required. In accordance with the Ethics Examination criteria should a pupil have to attempt the examination for a 3rd time then a more refined plan will be prepared that ensures the pupil is prioritizing that exam. In terms of finance, should a pupil be required to undertake the examination for a 3rd time then UNIT Chambers will make a 50% contribution towards it. In the event that a pupil is required to sit the examination for a 4th time there shall be a meeting as between the pupil, pupil supervisor, practice manager and CEO to discuss next steps. This will involve a discussion between the PLT, BSB and the Ethics Board.

Financing of Pupillage

- 25) In respect of the practising period of pupillage, the pupil is guaranteed an income of £18,884 per annum, this will increase to £21,060 in January 2024. In the non-practising period, the pupil is paid the sum of £1,573.66 on the first working day of the month following each completed month of pupillage (this will increase to £1,755 from January 2024).

- 26) In the practising period, the pupil will receive a guaranteed minimum income of £1573.66 which will be paid on the first working day of the month following each completed month of pupillage. Any difference between the guaranteed income and the pupil's actual earnings, if higher, will also be paid on the first working day of the month following the month in which the earnings are received.

- 27) UNIT Chambers will cover the cost of reasonable travel expenses when travelling off the Northern Circuit (limited to £100 per month) during the first six months of pupillage.

- 28) UNIT Chambers will support the pupil accessing all compulsory courses and where those courses can only reasonably be accessed off circuit then UNIT Chambers will assist the Pupil with covering reasonable travel expenses.

Roles and Duties of Pupil Supervisors

- 29) Your Pupil Supervisor will be allocated in advance of commencing pupillage and will have completed the necessary training to be eligible as a pupil supervisor and their name will appear on the necessary register.

- 30) As an Approved Education & Training Organisation UNIT Chambers will decide which members of chambers are suitable to be Pupil Supervisors. In considering the suitability and competence of a barrister to act as a pupil supervisor, UNIT Chambers will check the disciplinary record of the barrister. Other considerations are likely to include: Professional experience, nature of Supervisor's practice and whether it offers appropriate learning opportunities, the time they can devote to a pupil, aptitude to create an appropriate learning environment; and competence to provide effective feedback.

- 31) Unit Chambers will require all Supervisors to meet the regulatory requirements of the BSB as set out in Section 4b, para 20 & 21 of The Bar Qualification Manual. To meet these requirements Supervisors will attend appropriate training session provided by their Inn or on Circuit or other external providers, that they engage in studying the documents and guidance issued by the BSB as well as attending the training provided by Unit Chambers as an AETO. UNIT's CEO, assisted by the Risk & Compliance Advisor, is responsible for ensuring compliance by Pupil Supervisors. Refresher training for pupil supervisors is mandatory every five years, or after three years if the individual has not been a pupil supervisor during that time. The Practice Manager will keep a record of the date on which each Pupils Supervisor is approved and the date on which they need to update their training. These records will be reviewed annually by the PLT.
- 32) Future Pupil Supervisors will be appointed by the PLT and will be selected based on the appropriateness of their practice to meet the training needs of the pupil.
- 33) Should the Pupil Supervisor become unwell, take an unplanned absence from work or other events that interfere with his / her ability to deliver on his / her obligations as Pupil Supervisor, UNIT Chambers will support the pupil in identifying an agreed plan to manage the situation. In the first instance, UNIT Chambers will look internally to allocate a pupil supervisor. If this is not available, UNIT Chambers will liaise with other chambers on circuit to seek assistance with providing the pupil with the necessary experience and support (UNIT Chambers committing to maintaining the financing of the pupil). In addition UNIT Chambers would liaise with the circuit administrator and the Family Law Bar Association. This will be overseen by UNIT's consultant senior practice manager and Risk and Compliance Officer (Martin Griffiths).

- 34) The Pupil Supervisor will ensure that the 'Written Agreement' has been signed and will explain the training programme to Pupils during the induction. They will discuss how the programme will lead the pupil to achieving the Threshold Standard to meet the Competencies in the Professional Statement. In addition, during the induction process, the Pupil Supervisor will enquire as to whether the pupil has any personal difficulties or care commitments that require UNIT Chambers to make reasonable adjustments in providing pupillage to them.
- 35) The Pupil Supervisor shall ensure that, so far as possible, the Pupil's environment (physical, professional and social) within UNIT Chambers is such as to facilitate the Pupil's task of learning and preparing for practice at the Bar.
- 36) The Pupil Supervisor should require the Pupil to read case papers and draft pleadings and other documents including opinions and should require the Pupil to accompany them to conferences and to court so that the Pupil has the opportunity to gain all such experience as is appropriate for a person commencing practice and the type of work done by the future members of UNIT Chambers.
- 37) The Pupil Supervisor should discuss all work done with the Pupil and enable the Pupil to see Court work done and meet instructing solicitors.
- 38) During the practising period the Pupil Supervisor should give assistance before the Pupil goes into Court and be prepared to discuss the experience afterwards.
- 39) The Pupil Supervisor must ensure that the Pupil is well-grounded in the rules of conduct and etiquette at the Bar. Role and Duties of Pupils

Role and Duties of Pupils

- 40) A Pupil is expected to be fully committed to Pupillage. Holidays and days away from Chambers are arranged with the Pupil Supervisor and, in the practicing period, with the UNIT Chambers Practice Manager.
- 41) A Pupil is expected to respect the character and ethos of UNIT Chambers and do their best to further its standing and reputation by maintaining the highest possible standards of appearance, behaviour and attitude to professional and lay clients.
- 42) A Pupil is required to maintain the confidentiality of UNIT Chambers and its clients and not to discuss matters affecting either the administration and organisation of UNIT Chambers or any of the work done within Chambers with anyone outside UNIT unless

given specific permission to do so by the relevant Member of Chambers or the Pupil Supervisor.

43) A Pupil is not expected to know everything but is expected to ask questions and do their own research. In particular, a Pupil should not hesitate to get things clear and be satisfied as to what is expected of them at any time or in any circumstance by asking for advice and assistance from the Pupil Supervisor, or any other member of management at Unit.

44) A Pupil will be expected, as Chambers grows, to assist other members from time to time when reasonably needed.

45) A Pupil will be required to maintain a pupillage diary during the non-practising period setting out the work they have observed and undertaken in light of the competencies set out in the training programme.

46) A Pupil will provide documentary evidence upon request confirming that they have satisfied all requirements that would allow them to undertake pupillage at Chambers.

Pupillage – The Non-Practising Period

47) Each Pupil is assigned to a Pupil Supervisor for the non-practising period as decided by the PLT.

48) The PLT in conjunction with the Pupil Supervisor will ensure that the Pupil has applied for and obtained their Provisional Practising Certificate in order to provide reserved legal activities.

49) The Pupil Supervisor is responsible for introducing the Pupil into Chambers and to do the following;

- introduce Pupils to other Members of UNIT.
- discuss the structure of Pupillage, hours of work, training, security of and access to Chambers, and such like matters;
- discuss appearance, confidentiality and conduct with solicitors and precisely what will be expected during Pupillage;
- discuss finance, discipline, grievances and provide a copy of this procedure,
- deal with any questions or worries expressed by the Pupil. A written record is maintained of the induction process.

50) Thereafter, the Pupil works closely with the Pupil Supervisor but is subject to the overall supervision of the Pupillage Leadership Team. The Pupil's training consists of accompanying the Pupil Supervisor to Court (remotely where necessary), carrying out paperwork, both advisory and pleading and attending conferences.

51) The Pupil Supervisor monitors the Pupil's progress by the standard of the work done and discussing with the Pupil how the work is proceeding and providing informal feedback sessions on at least a fortnightly basis.

52) At the end of each three months of the pupillage a formal review will be conducted and a written report will be provided by the Pupil Supervisor covering:

- the written agreement and training programme, the pupil's diary and the competencies to concentrate on
- their impressions and views of the Pupil
- the Pupil's strengths, and any areas for improvement.

53) An informal review will take place on a fortnightly basis, covering the area outlined above.

54) At the end of the non-practising period the CEO and the Pupil Supervisor will ensure that the pupil applies for their Provisional Practising Certificate. The Practice Manager will keep a record that the certificate has been obtained.

Pupillage – The Practising Period

55) Pupils are able to accept small briefs and instructions in order to develop experience under the continuing supervision of their Pupil Supervisor.

56) The Pupil is expected to attend all compulsory continuing education seminars as required by the Bar Council throughout the pupillage. Pupils should maintain a suitable written record of all training received, courses and seminars attended, and all continuing professional education.

57) During the practicing period the Pupil is eligible for court work and the distribution of briefs among working Pupils is carried out by the support team on a rotational basis where Chambers has more than one pupil in their practicing period so as to ensure fair distribution.

58) The distribution of work to pupils in their practicing period and to junior tenants is monitored by the Leadership Team in accordance with the Unit Chambers Fair Allocation of Work Policy and by computerised records of:

- the number of chargeable items of work,
- fees earned,
- the main reason for the Practice Manager's choice of tenant or Pupil, i.e. availability, or their relevant experience, or whether it was a career development opportunity. If any discrimination is identified the CEO of Unit Chambers will ensure that this is investigated and that action is taken to prevent this from happening again.

59) Upon the successful completion of pupillage the CEO of Unit Chambers and the Pupil Supervisor will ensure that the pupil applies for a Full Practising

Certificate. A record that the certificates have been obtained will be kept by the Practice Manager

60) If a Pupil does not successfully complete their pupillage Chambers may consider a request to extend the pupillage. Chambers is not obliged to extend a pupillage and if a request is declined chambers will give written reasons for its decision.

Grievance Procedure

61) In the course of Pupillage it is expected that the Pupil and Pupil Supervisor will establish a good professional understanding and mutual confidence and respect. It is also expected that any professional or Chambers-related problems which the Pupil may have will be discussed and resolved initially between the Pupil and the Supervisor or the Practice Manager.

62) In the event that a Pupil is dissatisfied with the decision of the Pupil Supervisor in relation to the grievance or has a grievance that he or she does not wish to pursue through the Pupil Supervisor, the Pupil should refer the grievance to our Practice Manager (Eve Humphries). That person will discuss the grievance with all parties concerned and endeavor to resolve the grievance tactfully and in the strictest confidence. Should the matter not be resolved the Pupil can request that the matter is dealt with under the formal chambers grievance procedure

63) In the event that the recommendation of the PLT, in consultation with the Practice Manager, is that the relationship between the pupil and pupil supervisor has irretrievably broken down, in the first instance, UNIT Chambers will attempt to identify an alternative Pupil Supervisor from UNIT Chambers. If this is not possible, UNIT Chambers will liaise with other Chambers on circuit to seek assistance with providing the pupil with the necessary experience and support (Unit Chambers committing to maintaining the financing of the pupil). In addition, UNIT Chambers would liaise with the circuit administrator and the Family Law Bar Association.

64) In the event that a Pupil does not meet one of the competencies or pass compulsory courses, it will be at the discretion of the CEO of Unit Chambers and the Pupil Supervisor as to whether to apply to the Unit Leadership Team for an extension following an interview with the Pupil.

Discipline

65) In the first instance the Pupil Supervisor will be responsible for the discipline and good conduct of the pupil under their supervision and will be expected to resolve any issues that may arise by giving guidance and advice.

66) In the event that the pupil's conduct raises a more serious disciplinary issue the matter will be referred to the CEO who, in conjunction with the Risk & Compliance Advisor will investigate the matter in accordance with the UNIT Chambers Internal Grievance Policy and take whatever action is appropriate. If, arising from the investigation, it is found that the matter

is deemed to amount to misconduct that requires chambers to make a report to the BSB then the CEO is responsible for making that report. This does not limit an individual barristers obligations under rC66 of the BSB Handbook.

Membership selection process

67) On successful completion of pupillage, the pupil will be entitled to make a formal application for membership.

68) The application process will require the pupil to provide a CV and cover letter addressing why they wish to apply for tenancy, to enclose their pupillage diary and examples of written work. The board members of UNIT Chambers will hold a meeting to discuss the application. In advance of that meeting, the Chairman will liaise with the Pupil Supervisor who will provide a written report and the Board will consult with the practice manager, instructing solicitors and judges to gain feedback.

69) The Board will make a written recommendation to the PLT in respect of membership.

70) Whilst it is hoped that each pupil taken on will become a member upon completion of pupillage, there is no guarantee. In the event of a pupillage not leading to membership, UNIT Chambers will do what it can to assist in an alternative placement.

71) All Members and pupils are encouraged to attend seminars and courses and to belong to the specialist bar association relevant to their area of practice in order to keep up to date with the area(s) of law in which they practice. Barristers are required to comply with the Bar Council requirements for continuing professional development.

72) All Members (as required by the Bar Council) and pupils are required to review their training and development requirements annually and to maintain a continuous record of their professional development activities including courses, seminars and training attended. Such record should show:

- a general description of the member's actual experience
- the date of any course/training
- the title of the course/training
- the course or training provider.
- any membership of Specialist Bar Associations It is the responsibility of each member to ensure that his/her record is accurate and up to date.

73) The Practice Manager will review on an annual basis the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms that have been submitted to UNIT Chambers.

74) The PLT will annually review this policy, the pupillage recruitment, the feedback from pupils and supervisors at the end of pupillage and the membership recruitment process.

Appendix

The records to be kept by the Pupillage Leadership Team include:

Pupillage Application Records

Pupillage Progress Assessment

Pupillage Equal Opportunity Records

Pupillage Grievance Records

Pupil's Training Records

Pupil Supervisors Professional Development and Training Records

Policy amended 12/01/2023 to confirm PLT for 2023.

Policy amended 17/8/2023

Policy updated 21/09/2023